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ABSTRACT

This report describes a plan for motivating students to read in order to allow them to enjoy and appreciate literature and to provide the practice necessary to become effective readers. The targeted population consisted of first and fourth grade students in a middle class community, located in the Middle West. The problems of minimal time engaged in recreational reading and negative attitudes toward reading were documented through teacher observation checklists, parent surveys, and student questionnaires. Analysis of probable cause data revealed that students often chose alternative activities during their free time, did not see their parents or teachers as reading role models, and were uninspired by text-related and unappealing reading materials in school. Reviews of approaches to teaching reading revealed a curricular over emphasis on basal readers and skills and a lack of planning for self-selected independent reading and teacher read-aloud. A review of solution strategies suggested by leading authorities in the area of children's literacy, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the selection of two interventions: a daily teacher read-aloud program in the targeted first and fourth grades; and the implementation of Wonderfully Exciting Books (WEB), a home-school independent reading program. Post intervention data indicated an increase in time students engaged in recreational reading in school and at home and the establishment of more positive attitudes toward reading. It is recommended that read-aloud and follow-up activities should play a major role in the literacy development of the students throughout the school year. The implementation of a home-school independent reading program is recommended, and it is suggested that this program continue for the duration of the school year. Contains 20 references and 6 tables of data. Appendixes contain parent and student questionnaires, a teacher observation checklist, student reading logs and monthly reading record forms, a list of student responsibilities for WEB reading, a daily reading log points rubric, interview questions, and annotated lists of books suitable for reading aloud. (Author/RS)

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MOTIVATING STUDENT READING THROUGH READ-ALOUDS AND HOME-SCHOOL INDEPENDENT READING

Linda Wojciechowski
Deborah Zweig

An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

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Linda Wojciechowski and Deborah Zweig

January 2003

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A review of solution strategies suggested by leading authorities in the area of children's literacy, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the selection of two interventions: a daily teacher read-aloud program in the targeted first and fourth grades; and the implementation of a home-school independent reading program.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The students in the targeted first and fourth grade classes in a Midwestern community exhibited a lack of interest in reading that resulted in decreased exposure to literature and an insufficient amount of the practice necessary to become effortless and effective readers. Evidence for the existence of the problem included teacher checklists documenting students' independent reading, parent surveys concerning their children's recreational reading at home, and student questionnaires regarding personal interest in reading for pleasure.

Immediate Problem Context

The targeted school contained kindergarten through sixth grade classes and had a student population of 375. The population was diverse. It included 85% White, 1% Black, 10% Hispanic, and 4% Asian Pacific Islanders.

The teacher and support staff consisted of 45 persons. The percentage of teachers with a bachelor's degree was 80%, and the percentage of teachers with a master's degree was 20%. The pupil-teacher ratio was 10:1.

The targeted school was located in a middle class area. This area included a mixture of white-collar and blue-collar workers. Five percent of the students were from low-income families and participated in the free lunch program.

In addition to the core curriculum, students in the targeted school participated in art, music, library, and computer education classes. Students also attended the Science and Environmental Center every other week. Students in grades 5 and 6 took French and also had the choice to take instrumental band instruction. All students in grades 2-5 received enrichment opportunities through the district's WINGS program. Sixth grade students identified as gifted participated in the WINGS pullout program. Early intervention was emphasized for children with special needs in the area of literacy. These programs included Reading Recovery, Title I, and Early Literacy Foundation (ELF).

At the targeted school, all students' parents had personal contact with the school staff during the school year. Personal contact included parent-teacher conferences, parental visits to school, school visits to home, telephone conversations, and written correspondence. Parental involvement in school activities and programs ranged from frequent to rare.

Two issues that concerned the targeted school were high mobility rate of the students and the number of Limited-English-Proficiency (LEP) students. The high mobility rate was seen as a factor that negatively influenced student achievement. The mobility rate was 21% for the targeted school, which was more than double the rate for the district as a whole. The second issue that concerned the targeted school was the number of LEP students housed in this school. Seven percent of the total student

population fell into this category. The Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI) for limited English-speaking students, located in the targeted school, was the district's intervention. Many teachers felt that the program inadequately addressed the needs of the TPI students as well as the classroom teachers.

The Surrounding Community

The District had five elementary schools and one junior high school. Grades served were kindergarten through eighth grade. The number of teachers was 180. The staff had an average of 13 years teaching experience. A principal headed each elementary school, and a principal and an assistant principal headed the junior high. The district office was staffed with a superintendent and two assistant superintendents, one in charge of curriculum development, and the other in charge of business management.

The district's enrollment was about 2,700. The enrollment had remained relatively constant in the past decade. The population of the district consisted of 91% White, 1% Black, 6% Hispanic, and 2% Asian Pacific Islander. Four percent of the district's families were low-income, and 2% of the students were LEP. The mobility rate was 10%, and the attendance rate was about 96%.

The targeted school was located in a village with a population of about 57,000. The average household size was about 2.5 persons. The size of the community was about 22 square miles. The ethnic and racial make up of the area was 92% White, 4% Black, 5% Hispanic, and 4% other. The median housing value was about $150,000, and the average family income was $60,000. There were about 22,000 households.

The village had many retail facilities available to its residents. The community had approximately 700,000 square feet of retail space located in neighborhood and

community shopping centers. It also had numerous restaurants, fast food outlets, and car dealerships. About 300 acres of land were used for commercial purposes. The targeted village was not an industrial area; it was primarily a residential and commercial area. There were about 30,000 people in the labor force and about 1,000 people unemployed yielding an unemployment rate of about 3%.

The targeted village had 18 elementary schools, 2 junior high schools, 2 public high schools, and 4 trade and technical schools. It had a hospital and medical center with an accredited trauma center. Recreational pursuits were available at several community centers, numerous parks, swimming pools, playing fields for sports, and an ice arena. Cultural opportunities were available at the full service public library, community theater, and public concerts.

To renovate and remodel district-wide schools, bonds were sold to community members. The funds generated from the sale of these bonds were used to pay for the renovation costs of five sites. The renovation of the targeted school provided an additional five rooms containing 7,000 square feet, which alleviated overcrowding.

National Context

The problem of students' lack of interest in reading has generated concern at the national level (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). Reading for pleasure is often not seen as a priority when children have leisure time. As a result, many students do not derive the benefits inherent in reading, such as exposure to a variety of literary genres, enrichment in vocabulary, and gains in comprehension. Independent reading, both in and out of school, is associated with gains in reading achievement (Anderson, et al. 1985).

Many children do not devote much of their leisure time to reading. Independent reading among children at home has been shown to be a low priority (Anderson, Fielding, & Wilson, 1988; Greaney, 1980).

Most students do not spend a high percentage of the school day occupied by the act of reading. Goodlad (1984) reported that a very low percent of class time is spent on reading in the elementary school. Some parents who know that their children are not reading a lot outside of school are not concerned because they believe that their children are reading extensively at school. Goodlad does not support this belief.

Mullis' study (as cited in Barton & Coley, 1992) found that as students get older, the extent of reading for pleasure decreases. Reading less as a leisure activity presents an obstacle to students' continuing development as readers.

Much concern has been expressed about the lack of opportunity for children to read during the school day and lack of motivation to read at home during leisure time. There is concern about the tendency of children to read less as they get older. Comparisons of studies on reading from 1971 through 1996 confirm that children do very little independent reading outside of school. In addition, recent reports from The Nation's Report Card support the assertion that a minimal amount of reading is done by students outside of school (Campbell, Donahue, Reese, & Phillips, as cited in Wolf, 1998). "Increasing the proportion of children who read widely and with evident satisfaction ought to be as much a goal of reading instruction as increasing the number who are competent readers" (Anderson, et al., 1985, p.15).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

The researchers found a lack of student interest in reading. Evidence of the problem was found through parent surveys, student questionnaires (Appendix A), and teacher observation checklists (Appendix B). This lack of interest was exhibited at home and in school.

Table 1

Parent Survey Indicating the Percent of Independent Reading of the Targeted Students

Frequency	Percent of Students
Never	28
Rarely	12
Sometimes	56
Often	4

n=25

Surveys were distributed to 25 parents of first and fourth grade students. The purpose of the survey was to document student attitudes toward reading. In particular, the

researchers were interested in frequency of independent reading and preferences for reading in free time activities. A summary of the responses is presented in Tables 1 and 2.

When asked about the frequency with which their children read independently at home, parents reported an overall lack of time devoted to this activity. Of the 25 students, 28% never did recreational reading at home, while only 4% read often. A total of 40% of the students never or rarely read at home.

Table 2

Parent Survey Indicating the Percent of Free Time Activities of the Targeted Students

Free Time Activities	Percent of Students
Listening to Music	4
Playing with Friends or Siblings	36
Watching Television	24
Reading	12
Participating in a Sport	12
Playing Video Games	4
Other	8

n=25

Parents were asked to rank their children's preferences for free time activities at home. Of the seven choices of activities commonly engaged in at home, playing with friends or siblings or watching television were the first choices of 60% of the children. In contrast, reading was the first choice of only 12% of the students.

Thirty-five first and fourth grade students responded to questionnaires about reading. The researchers asked students to describe their attitudes about reading. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Students' Perceptions of Their Attitudes Toward Reading

Attitudes	Percent of Students
Love Reading	14
Like Reading	34
Dislike Reading	51

n=35

Of the 35 students, 51% responded that they disliked reading as opposed to 14% who reported that they loved reading. The remaining 34% had a neutral attitude.

The researchers completed observation checklists to document the frequency of reading as a free time activity. The observations were made in a first grade class and in a fourth grade class. On the first observation, 10% of the students frequently selected reading among other options, 45% sometimes chose reading, and 45% did not choose reading as an activity.

The researchers' documentation included parent surveys, student questionnaires, and teacher observation checklists. The evidence indicated that many students in the targeted classrooms exhibited a lack of interest in independent reading.

The students in the targeted school had many interests, which occupied their time. These activities included watching television, playing video games, participating in

sports, and playing with friends or siblings. These activities took away from time that could have been spent reading.

Probable Causes of the Problem

Many parents and teachers of students in the targeted school did not model reading. Very few parents read to or with their children, and few parents took their children to the library on a regular basis. In addition, books were not frequently purchased from book clubs. Many teachers were not role models of reading. Results of a teacher read-aloud survey indicated that reading aloud to students was not a high priority (see Appendix C for the teacher read-aloud survey). Very little time was devoted to this activity, particularly at the intermediate level. There was no formal school-wide independent reading program, such as Sustained Silent Reading, in place, and independent silent reading time was not widely practiced. Children often did not see their teachers reading aloud or silently. When students do not observe important adults in their lives reading, they may not see the importance of reading for themselves.

Lack of available interesting and engaging reading materials may contribute to students' lack of motivation to read. Children have access to a limited number of books in many classrooms. In addition, much of the reading material is text-based and does little to stimulate the students' interest in reading.

The literature suggests several underlying causes for children's lack of motivation to read. One probable cause is that interests such as watching television and playing video games often take priority over reading when a child has free time. According to Anderson, Fielding, and Wilson (1988), 90% of the students in their study devoted only 1% of their free time to reading and 30% to watching television. Greaney (1980)

discussed the number of minutes per day spent reading compared to other activities. Of nine major leisure activities, reading ranked seventh. Overall, only 5% of leisure time was spent reading, and a total of 22% of the students did not devote any time to leisure reading.

Another cause of lack of motivation to read may be the absence of modeling by parents and teachers. Children read more when they see other people reading, both at home and in school. However, both sets of role models often fail in their responsibility to encourage recreational reading. Children whose parents do more leisure reading read more than children whose parents show less interest in books (Neuman, as cited in Krashen, 1993). According to Trelease (2001), teachers, although they have less impact than parents, should be reading role models as well. However, teachers are seldom observed savoring a book for its own sake or heard talking about a book they have read. Teachers do not read any more often than adults in the general population. In one study, 75% of the teachers were identified as "light" book readers who read only one or two books every year (Zill & Winglee, as cited in Trelease, 2001). "You can't give someone a cold if you don't have one, and you can't give a child the love of reading if you yourself don't have it" (Trelease, 2001, p. 170).

A third probable cause for the problem is the lack of time spent reading in school. Students attach importance to activities to which teachers devote a lot of time. Anderson, et al. (1988) pointed out that the frequency with which children read both in and out of school depends on the priority classroom teachers give to independent reading. According to Goodlad (1984), reading for enjoyment occupies only 6% of class time at the elementary level.

The tendency of many teachers to use inappropriate reading materials may contribute to children's lack of desire to read. The availability of appealing books is associated with the amount of independent reading students do. A presumption of all research of reading preferences is that children will read more if they enjoy what they are reading (Klesius, Laframboise, & Gaier, 1998). Teachers are overly concerned with text-related materials because their primary objective is to cover course material. In so doing, teachers often overlook materials that could motivate reluctant readers. Reading materials that are not appealing, relevant, meaningful, or stimulating may contribute to the problem (Thein, as cited in Casteel, 1989). Trelease (2001) discussed the importance of "home run books," books so engaging to the reader that they have the power to change the child's mind about reading. In two studies built around the concept of "home run books," the majority of avid readers were able to name favorite books that inspired them to continue reading. Those children who disliked reading, however, remarked that it was "boring" and were not able to name a favorite book (Von Sprecken, Kim, & Krashen, as cited in Trelease, 2001).

There are several probable causes for the lack of interest in recreational reading exhibited by many children. Students often choose alternative activities such as watching television or playing with friends when they have free time. Many children do not see their parents and teachers read and therefore do not see the need to do so themselves. Very little time is given to recreational reading in most schools, and many teachers do not spark children's enthusiasm for reading because the materials are text-related or are boring and unappealing. A combination of these reasons helps to explain the limited interest children display in recreational reading.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

Aliteracy, having the ability to read but lacking the motivation to read, is a matter of widespread concern throughout the United States. Negative attitudes toward reading begin very early in the lives of many children. Researchers and prominent authorities in the area of reading have expressed concern about attitudes in many classrooms where a general feeling of apathy toward reading prevails. Turner (1992) reported that those children considered reluctant readers not only include poor readers but also many capable readers. Beers (as cited in Trelease, 2001) concluded that the vast majority of teenagers know how to read but choose not to read. She further stated that aliterates can be divided into three groups: dormant, uncommitted, and unmotivated. Dormant readers are those who like to read but are too busy or stressed to do it on a regular basis. Uncommitted readers do not read because they do not find it enjoyable. However, they respect those who do read, almost wish they had the habit, and believe that they may, sometime in the future, become readers. Unmotivated readers view reading as meaningless for themselves but additionally are determined that they will never like it. They often are not able to form a connection visually and emotionally to the plots and characters in books.

The importance of developing proficiency in reading has been argued by many researchers. Karoly (as cited in Understanding Reading Achievement, 2000) discussed the long-term impact of low reading skill levels and reported that there are strong links between low reading levels and dropping out of school, juvenile and adult crime, welfare dependency, and unemployment. A lack of success, both in and out of school, is experienced by the vast majority of children with low reading levels. Researchers further suggest that students who cannot read cannot succeed in today's information-rich and technology-literate age.

In addition to the long range negative effects that poor reading skills produce, there is a more immediate problem to consider. About 85% of all curriculum after fourth grade is taught through reading. Students must read to master the content in social studies, science, and other subject areas. The fundamental skill of reading must be mastered if students are to succeed in other areas of the curriculum.

Specific components of reading achievement that are improved with independent reading have been identified by reading researchers. Fluency, vocabulary, and content knowledge are areas that are positively impacted by recreational reading.

Independent reading builds fluency. Fluency, in turn, has a positive effect on comprehension and overall reading achievement. According to Cunningham and Allington (1999), children must read substantial amounts of print to become effortless and effective readers.

Graves (1991) argued also that children learn to read by reading. He further suggested that children should read for 30 to 40 minutes every day, with the amount of time varying with age and experience in reading books. Graves concluded that children can make no more efficient use of their time than when they are "lost" in the books they love.

An increase in vocabulary has been attributed to independent reading. Many researchers argue that reading volume is the prime contributor to individual differences in children's vocabulary (Hayes, as cited in Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998). Print provides many word learning opportunities. There are 50% more rare words in children's books than in adult prime time television or the conversation of college graduates (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998). One group of researchers has asserted that beyond the third grade, children learn the majority of new words incidentally while reading books and other materials (as cited in Anderson, et al., 1985).

Independent reading builds background knowledge. By reading widely, children are exposed to diverse information and topics, which they are able to use in future reading. Cunningham and Stanovich (1998) determined that the more avid readers in their study had a broader knowledge base then those who did less reading.

Researchers have demonstrated the value of recreational reading in school. They concluded that the amount of independent, silent reading children do in school is significantly related to gains in reading achievement (Allington, as cited in Anderson, et al., 1985).

Graves (1991) pointed out a further benefit of recreational reading in school when he reported that children who read in school read at home and in abundance. If children are in the middle of a good plot, they will read at home without assignment. If they begin reading in school, they will have the momentum to continue at home (Atwell, as cited in Graves, 1991).

In addition, the volume of reading done outside of school is consistently related to an increase in reading proficiency. In a study of fifth graders' leisure time activities outside school, the time spent reading books was found to be the best predictor of a child's growth as a reader from the second to the fifth grade (Anderson, Fielding, & Wilson, as cited in Routman, 1991). In another study, the highest scoring students on tests of reading achievement read five times as

much as the average scoring readers, and 200 times more than the poorest readers (Anderson, et al., as cited in Trelease, 1998).

Reading is an accrued skill. The more students read, the more accomplished they become. The more accomplished they become, the more they enjoy reading. The more they enjoy reading, the more they read. National and international research has pointed out that students who read the most read the best, and those who read the least read the worst. Nearly all children's futures depend on how well and how much they eventually read (Trelease, 1998).

The report of the Commission on Reading (as cited in Becoming a Nation of Readers, 1985) concluded that children should spend more time engaged in independent reading, and that independent reading, whether in or out of school, is associated with gains in reading achievement. The Commission further stated that increasing the amount of time children read ought to be a priority for parents and teachers. Although the reasons for increasing the amount of self-initiated reading have been well documented, most children do not devote much of their free time to reading. In a well-known study of fifth graders, it was found that they rarely read for pleasure. Anderson, et al. (1985) reported

> ...50% of the children read books for an average of four minutes per day or less, 30% read two minutes per day or less, and fully 10% never reported reading any book on any day. For the majority of the children reading from books occupied 1% of their free time, or less. (p. 77)

Students were reading books, magazines, and newspapers even less in 1990 than in 1984. They also did less reading for enjoyment as they got older. Only 9% of nine-year-olds read books, magazines, or newspapers on a daily basis, and by age 17, one in four read such material

only on a monthly or yearly basis. Thirteen-year-olds in the United States did less reading for pleasure than did their peers in 11 other countries studied in 1991 (Barton & Coley, 1992).

There was a striking comparison between the amount of outside reading and the amount of television viewing in a study of eighth graders. The students spent an average of two hours per week reading, and they spent 21 hours per week watching television (Barton & Coley, 1992). According to Anderson, et al. (1988), students spent an average of 10 minutes per day reading books as compared to 17 minutes playing games, 31 minutes listening to music, and 131 minutes watching television.

Motivated readers are those who participate in self-initiated reading. The goal of teaching reading is to develop efficient and self-motivated readers. Motivation does matter when it comes to literacy achievement. As children progress through school, their motivation for reading decreases. Teachers face the difficult challenge of developing positive attitudes toward reading and the even more difficult challenge of transforming the negative and sometimes hostile attitudes that some children exhibit. If teachers want their students to read as well as they possibly can, they must find ways to combat the problem of decreasing motivation (Cunningham & Allington, 1999).

Ivey and Broaddus (2001) revealed factors that motivate students to read. In a survey of 1,765 diverse sixth graders, the responses indicated that their major motivation for reading came from having time for independent reading of self-selected books and teachers reading aloud to them.

Current theory and research suggest five essential classroom features that support the development of intrinsic motivation to read: access to books, choice, collaboration, familiarity, and appropriate reading-related incentives (Cunningham, Hall, & Gambrell, 2002). Having a

print-rich environment helps develop highly motivated readers as does providing students with opportunities to make choices about what they read. Social intereactions, such as sharing ideas and recommending books, has a positive influence on reading motivation. In addition, children are curious to read books that are somewhat familiar to them. Curiosity can be piqued through talking with friends about books, hearing book talks by teachers, hearing short but interesting sections of books, or perusing books in libraries, book stores, and book fairs. Finally, book-related extrinsic rewards can be used effectively to increase the intrinsic motivation of children who do not value books and literacy. If reading-related rewards such as books, bookmarks, and extra time to read are used as incentives, children are likely to view the act of reading as desirable.

Many researchers have pointed out the importance and benefits of independent reading, the correlation between volume of reading and reading proficiency, and the inadequate amount of time children spend reading in school and at home. Strategies have been devised and implemented in an attempt to alleviate the serious problem of aliteracy in America.

One strategy that is used in some classrooms to promote literacy is guided reading using trade books rather than basal readers. In guided reading the teacher meets with a group of children to discuss a book of which they each have a copy and have read.

Guided reading is the heart of the instructional reading program. Students are expected to think critically about a book, and the teacher's role is one of supporting rather than directing reading. Selections that have been read silently are discussed, and the children respond in open-ended and personal ways. The purpose of the discussion is to appreciate and enjoy literature and to share personal and group insights (Routman, 1991).

A literature or trade book approach to reading is used to provide children with the opportunity to read authentic literature. The emphasis with this approach is on self-selection of books by children. According to Cunningham and Allington (1999), the ultimate goal of reading instruction is the reading of real books, and the purpose of learning to read is to read real books as opposed to excerpts of books that are found in the basal reading series. It is when children read authentic literature that they understand the purpose of reading and what reading really is. Cunningham and Allington further suggested that each child has time in school every day to engage in self-selected reading. Children choose books from a collection gathered by the teacher. The collection contains a variety of books on themes being studied, books with varying levels of reading difficulty, old favorites, and books new to the children. Children's selection of books that will turn them into readers is the major goal of self-selected reading.

Another strategy used to promote literacy is sustained silent reading (SSR) (Trelease, 2001). This strategy provides time during the school day in which children read to themselves for a limited amount of time. Ten or fifteen minutes are the frequent choices, but the time is flexible to meet the needs of individual classes and is increased as children become more mature. Students select their own reading materials. No reports are required from the students, and no records are kept. A very important feature of SSR is that the teacher reads also and therefore serves as a role model for reading.

Some teachers and schools employ reading incentive programs to induce children to read. There is an ongoing debate over the practice of offering prizes to students for reading, and research on the subject is mixed (Trelease, 2001). One national reading incentive program is Pizza Hut's Book It! In this program, students obtain coupons for free pizzas based on the number of books they have read. Other incentive programs include The Accelerated Reader,

Books and Beyond, and the Great America 600 Minute Reading Club. Some libraries offer gift certificates and other prizes for participating in summer reading programs.

Teacher read-aloud is a strategy used to increase literacy. This practice includes most often the reading of picture books, chapter books, and poetry. Read-aloud is usually done with the entire class but may be done with a group of children or individual children. Some teachers schedule a set time for read-aloud, while others are more spontaneous in their approach. Three important purposes of read-aloud are to share literature with children, to develop enthusiasm for books, and to provide appropriate adult modeling of reading. According to Halloran (1988), a successful read-aloud program must be carefully planned and should begin on the first day of the school year and continue every day to the very last day of school.

Some schools encourage reading through the use of home-school independent reading programs. These programs involve parents as partners in an effort to increase the amount of time students devote to reading. According to Wolf (1998), action research projects show that students can greatly increase the number of books they read independently and raise their achievement levels when parental support is present. Parental involvement includes encouraging children to read at home, reading to and with children, helping to set goals, recording and analyzing the numbers of books read, and joining in the celebration of progress. The objective of programs such as Just Read and Wonderfully Exciting Books (WEB) reading is to markedly increase the amount of independent reading and, for the strategy to be effective, a strong home-to-school connection must be established.

The interventions selected by the researchers were read-aloud and WEB reading, a home-school independent reading program used by Routman (1991) as part of the balanced reading

program at her school. The purpose of the interventions was to promote independent reading and increase literacy skills.

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of the implementation of a read-aloud and home-school independent reading program, during the period of January 2002 to May 2002, the first and fourth grade students from the targeted classes will increase the amount of time engaged in independent reading, as measured by teacher observation checklists and student reading logs.

In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Select and collect books to be used for read-alouds.
2. Develop read-aloud follow-up activities.
3. Build a teacher read-aloud time into each classroom's daily schedule.
4. Develop WEB record keeping forms for use by the students.
5. Draft a letter to parents explaining WEB reading and their role in the program.
6. Develop the format for the interview process.
7. Develop a timeline for implementation of the WEB reading program.

As a result of the implementation of a read-aloud and home-school independent reading program, during the period of January 2002 to May 2002, the first and fourth grade students from the targeted classes will develop a more positive attitude toward reading as measured by student questionnaires and parent surveys.

In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Select and collect books to be used for read-alouds.
2. Develop read-aloud follow-up activities.

3. Build a teacher read-aloud time into each classroom's daily schedule.
4. Develop WEB record keeping forms for use by the students.
5. Draft a letter to parents explaining WEB reading and their role in the program.
6. Develop the format for the interview process.
7. Develop a timeline for implementation of the WEB reading program.

Project Action Plan

Week 1	- Give student questionnaire.
	- Give parent survey.
	- Complete teacher observation checklist.
	- Send WEB letter to parents.
	- Set up reading and interview corner.
	- Collect books for WEB reading.
	- Select books for read-alouds.
Week 2	- Explain WEB reading to class.
	- Distribute reading logs and explain how to fill them out.
	- Develop follow-up activities for read-alouds.
Week 3	- Begin daily read-aloud.
	- Distribute WEB reading logs.
	- Begin WEB reading.
Week 4	- Demonstrate WEB interview process. (teacher)
	- Role-play interview process. (students)
Week 5	- Complete teacher observation checklist.
	- Continue read-aloud, follow-up activity, and WEB reading.

Weeks 6-8 - Continue read-aloud and WEB reading.

Week 9 - Complete teacher observation checklist.

- Continue read-aloud and WEB reading.

Weeks 10-12 - Continue read-aloud and WEB reading.

Week 13 - Complete teacher observation checklist.

- Continue read-aloud and WEB reading.

Week 14 - Continue read-aloud and WEB reading.

Week 15 - Continue read-aloud, follow-up activity, and WEB reading.

Week 16 - Continue read-aloud and WEB reading.

Week 17 - Complete teacher observation checklist.

- Give student questionnaire.
- Give parent survey.
- Compare student questionnaire and parent survey results from week 1 and week 17.
- Look for trends or patterns in teacher observation checklists from weeks 1, 5, 9, 13, and 17.

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of the interventions, the teachers monitored the frequency of the selection of reading as a free time activity during the school day using teacher observation checklists. In addition, student reading logs and monthly reading records were examined to note the amount of independent reading. Parent surveys and student questionnaires on the topic of reading habits and attitudes were analyzed as part of the assessment process. Teacher observation checklists were completed before the interventions began and then once a month January through

May. Reading logs were examined every three school days, and monthly reading records were monitored once a month January through May. Parent surveys and student questionnaires were completed in December and May, before and after the implementation of the interventions.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Interventions

Many students in the researchers' first and fourth grade classes displayed a lack of interest in reading as a preferred leisure time activity. This apathy toward reading was demonstrated both in school and at home. The majority of students did not regularly select reading when it was offered as a free time optional activity at school and also did not frequently read for pleasure at home. The lack of time devoted to reading was viewed by the researchers as a serious problem because it resulted in an insufficient amount of practice in reading with a corresponding adverse effect on such vital literacy skills as vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The lack of exposure to quality children's literature was seen as a further problem. The goal of the researchers to produce lifelong readers was, of course, seriously jeopardized by their students' disinterest in books. Many of their students had not experienced the pleasure of reading, nor were they cognizant of the wide array of literature available for their exploration and enjoyment.

This project had two objectives. The first was to increase the amount of time students in the targeted classes engaged in independent reading. The second objective was to develop more positive attitudes toward reading in these students. The researchers' overall goal was to inspire

their students to devote a greater amount of their free time to recreational reading and to foster in them an appreciation for literature, helping them become lifelong readers.

The interventions utilized to accomplish the objectives of the project were read-aloud and WEB reading. Read-aloud included daily reading by the researchers to their students and related follow-up activities in the areas of oral and written language and art. WEB reading was an independent reading program connecting home and school. It included the reading by students of self-selected books at home and during independent reading time at school and follow-up interviews of the students conducted by the teacher. Reading logs, completed by students, were monitored by the teacher and parents. The purpose of both interventions was to combat the aliteracy observed in many of the students.

The action plan began with the development and distribution of a student questionnaire, parent survey, and teacher observation checklist to determine the existence and degree of aliteracy in the targeted classrooms. An analysis of the data followed receipt of the completed questionnaires and surveys and the completion of the initial teacher observation checklist.

In preparation for the implementation of read-aloud, the researchers selected books to be read to the students during the course of the intervention. They included picture books, novels, and poetry. Fiction and nonfiction selections were included, and many of the books and stories were chosen not only because the researchers judged them to be of high interest for the intended audience, but also because they were related to content areas and themes, providing enrichment and additional insights into topics to be studied. Books were chosen based on recommendations from leading authorities in the area of children's literature. Some noted experts consulted were Trelease, Sharp, Halloran, and Bauer. Selections were also made by browsing in local bookstores and libraries and by reading books and journals on literature selection. Books and journals

included The Read-Aloud Handbook, What's New in Children's Literature and How to Use it in Your Program, Children's Literature Review, Book Talk, Hornbook, and Bookbag. To become better informed about selecting books, the researchers attended reading seminars presented by experts in the area of children's literature. Criteria for book selection were literary merit, appeal to children, appropriateness for the intended audience, and in some cases, a connection to the curriculum. After choosing books for read-aloud, the researchers selected and developed follow-up activities to be used after some of the selections. Activities were chosen from three categories: creative writing, oral language and creative dramatics, and arts and crafts. Criteria for selection of follow-up activities included their ability to promote deeper insights and their potential to provide enjoyment for the students. Finally, a read-aloud time was inserted in the daily schedule of both classrooms.

Throughout the implementation period, the researchers in the targeted first and fourth grade classrooms read to their students daily at a regularly scheduled time after lunch for a period of 10 to 20 minutes and at various times during the school day. Follow-up activities were completed by students after listening to a book read by the teacher. These activities were completed for selected literature only and were not required for every read-aloud. Although some activities were done by individual students, most were completed in partners or cooperative learning groups.

In preparation for the second intervention, WEB reading, the researchers drafted and sent to parents an information letter explaining this home-school reading program. Additionally, daily and monthly reading logs were prepared as well as charts for recording future reading (See Appendices D, E, and F). Lists of student responsibilities and daily reading logs were devised to make the students aware of their role and duties (See Appendices G and H). Interview questions for fiction and nonfiction appropriate for first and fourth grade students were developed (See

Appendix I). Waterproof bags for transporting books to and from school and motivational posters with the theme, "Get Caught Up in a Good Book!" were ordered. A WEB reading area was set up in each classroom, and books for WEB reading were assembled and displayed in the WEB reading area.

The activities of WEB reading, designed to excite children about reading, encourage voluntary reading in and out of school, and create a community of readers, included self-selected reading, recommending books to each other, sharing book information and responses, and participating in interviews. First grade students read a minimum of 10 minutes each day outside of school, and fourth grade students read at least 20 to 30 minutes daily at home. They brought their books to and from school each day, kept a record of daily reading and of completed books, and prepared to be interviewed. Students selected books from the classroom library, school or public library, or from their own collection. Children were free to read their favorite authors and genres and to read about topics of interest to them. The students were given an overview of the WEB reading program and instructed how to complete their daily and monthly reading logs during the first week of the intervention. As books were finished, students signed up for an oral interview with the teacher or a classmate. The researchers monitored each student's reading log every three school days. The interview conducted after the completion of each book consisted of four or five questions taken from a list of which every student had a copy. The students were taught how to conduct a peer interview during the first week of the intervention. The teachers demonstrated how to interview a classmate about a completed book. After several demonstrations, student volunteers role-played the interview process. WEB reading was scheduled at the beginning of the school day for a period of 15 minutes in the targeted first grade class and 30 minutes in the fourth grade class. During WEB reading, students continued reading

where they left off the previous day at home, selected a new book, participated in an interview, or updated reading logs.

The action plan included the completion of a teacher observation checklist every four weeks during which time the researchers looked for trends in the reading habits of students. A student questionnaire and a parent survey were distributed during the final week of the action plan, and the results from the first and last weeks were compared. The implementation of the project action plan extended over a 17-week period.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess the effects of read-aloud and WEB reading on the frequency of independent reading, a parent survey was administered before and after the implementation of the interventions. A comparison of the percentage of students who read at varying degrees of frequency before and after the interventions is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Parent Survey Indicating the Percent of Independent Reading of the Targeted Students

Frequency	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
Never	28	8	20
Rarely	12	8	4
Sometimes	56	52	4
Often	4	32	28

n=25

The interventions appeared to have had a positive effect on the amount of time students engaged in independent reading. Of particular note is the increase in the percentage of students who read often following the interventions, from 4% to 32%. In addition, the number of students who never read decreased by 20%. After the interventions, there was a 24% increase in the number of students who read sometimes or often and a corresponding 24% decrease in the number of students who rarely or never read.

The results of the parent survey also revealed the percentage of students who devoted time to a variety of free time activities. A comparison of free time activities engaged in by the targeted students prior to and after the interventions is presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Parent Survey Indicating the Percent of Free Time Activities of the Targeted Students

Free Time Activities	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
Listening to Music	4	4	0
Playing with Friends or Siblings	36	28	8
Watching Television	24	24	0
Reading	12	24	12
Participating in a Sport	12	12	0
Playing Video Games	4	4	0
Other	8	4	4

n=25

The interventions seemed to have had a marginally positive effect on the tendency of the targeted students to choose reading from among all available free time options. After the interventions, there was an increase from 12% to 24% in the number of students making reading

their first choice of free time activities. However, playing with friends or siblings continued to be selected by a greater number of students, and watching television was just as popular a choice as reading. Overall, the differences were small or nonexistent, with four of the seven favorite free time activities showing no change.

Students also completed a questionnaire before and after the interventions. A comparison of the students' perceptions of their attitudes toward reading reported by percent is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

A Comparison of Students' Perceptions of Their Attitudes Toward Reading

Attitudes	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
Love Reading	14	29	15
Like Reading	34	54	20
Dislike Reading	51	17	34

n=35

The interventions appeared to have had a positive effect on students' perception of their attitudes toward reading. The researchers noted particularly a decrease from 51% to 17% in the number of students who stated in the second questionnaire that they disliked reading. This corresponded to an increase from 48% to 83% in the number of students who reported positive attitudes toward reading.

The researchers' observation checklists revealed a general pattern of students increasingly selecting reading as a free time activity when other options were presented. This was especially evident when books new to the classrooms and former teacher read-alouds were made available for students to read. The students in the targeted fourth grade class evidenced a greater increase

in choosing reading than did the students in the targeted first grade class. The researchers concluded that this may have been due in part to the more advanced literacy skills of the fourth grade students. In addition, the researchers assumed that older students are more likely to become involved in a chapter book or novel and take every opportunity to continue reading that particular book. In looking for trends in the teacher observation checklists over the course of the 17-week action plan, the researchers noted a gradual increase in the tendency of students to select reading as a favorite activity. When comparing the results of the first and last teacher observation checklists, the researchers observed a greater percentage of students selecting reading as the free time activity, sustaining interest over the allotted time period, and exhibiting enjoyment of and enthusiasm for reading.

The final method of assessment was student reading logs and monthly reading records. The researchers noted an overall pattern of increasing amounts of time in which students engaged in independent reading. Many students began to read more frequently and for greater periods of time. This was especially evident in the targeted fourth grade class. Once again, the researchers concluded that more highly developed literacy skills and greater involvement in novels may have accounted for the discrepancy between the reading habits of the targeted first and fourth grade classes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on time given to independent reading and students' attitudes toward reading, the students showed an improvement in both areas. The implementation of daily teacher read-aloud and a home-school recreational reading program appear to have positively affected the reading habits and attitudes of the students in the targeted first and fourth grade classes. The enjoyment of literature during read-aloud seems to have

transferred to an enthusiasm of reading for pleasure. Upon completion of a read-aloud, students often expressed a desire to read for themselves other books by the same author, other books in the same genre or on the same topic, or, in many cases, the very book that was just read to them. In addition, making a connection between home and school reading appears to have strengthened the reading habit in many of the students. Continuity between home and school reading and parental support and encouragement may have positively impacted the students' engagement in and enjoyment of recreational reading. The researchers assumed that continued implementation of the solution strategy would result in students who exhibit a heightened interest in reading for pleasure.

The researchers concluded that the project objectives, increased recreational reading time and more positive attitudes toward reading, were achieved with the implementation of a read-aloud and home-school reading program. It appears that the benefits to the students in the targeted classes suggest that the action plan be continued with successive groups of students entering first and fourth grade.

The researchers recommend that teacher read-aloud begin on the first day of school and should play a prominent role in the literacy development of the students. Follow-up activities that enhance reading comprehension and enjoyment of literature should be a part of the program. Continuity of the read-aloud program would be achieved if all teachers at all grade levels adopted the read-aloud program. A list of grade appropriate selections might prove to be helpful for those teachers who are not knowledgable about children's literature. Suggested lists of read-aloud titles for first and fourth grade were developed by the researchers (See Appendix J). Although duplication would be avoided if there was some discussion and coordination among teachers at various grade levels, the researchers strongly recommend that individual teachers

personally select books and stories to be shared with their students. Because there is often variability in interests and ability among students, the teacher is in the best position to select titles for read-alouds. Furthermore, all authorities on children's literature advise teachers to limit read-alouds to books they themselves love.

The researchers recommend that the implementation of a home-school independent reading program continue throughout the course of the school year. There are, however, some suggested modifications. While the researchers advise that self-selected independent reading be done all year, it need not strictly follow the WEB reading format. In particular, the researchers predicted that conducting interviews after every completed book for an entire school year would become tiresome and repetitive. To provide some variety, it is suggested that WEB reading, with its accompanying interviews, be limited to the second semester, the second and fourth quarters, or perhaps to one quarter of the school year only. First grade students would probably be unable to successfully participate in such a program until the second semester when they have developed the reading skills to read independently.

The researchers strongly advise that teachers make use of students to conduct peer interviews. There are two reasons for this suggestion. First, peer interviews provide the opportunity for students to discuss books between themselves, one of the critical classroom features that motivate students to read. Many of the students, especially at the fourth grade level, became quite skillful at eliciting elaborations on first responses that were somewhat limited, and a good exchange of ideas was observed by the researchers. Second, it is virtually impossible for the teacher to keep up with the number of interviews that are needed each day. The researchers recommend, however, that teachers make an effort to meet with each student as often as possible

because talking with students about books they have read provides a great deal of insight into their comprehension and thought processes.

The researchers' immediate goal was to promote student interest in recreational reading. This objective has been accomplished. It is the researchers' intent that the growth the students have experienced as a result of this action plan is but one step in the furtherance of the ultimate goal, which is to develop in the students a life-long love of reading.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Parent Reading Survey

Date _____

Please indicate your response with an X.

1. How frequently does your child read when he/she has free time at home?

_____ never

_____ rarely

_____ sometimes

_____ often

your comments:

2. On an **average**, how much time does your child devote to **recreational** reading at home **per day**?

_____ no time at all

_____ 1-15 minutes

_____ 16-30 minutes

_____ 31-45 minutes

_____ 46-60 minutes

_____ more than an hour

your comments:

3. How often do you read to or with your child?

_____ never

_____ rarely

_____ sometimes

_____ often

your comments:

4. Which activity would your child be **most** likely to choose in his/her free time at home?

_____ listening to music

_____ playing with friends or siblings

_____ watching television

_____ reading

_____ participating in a sport

_____ playing video games

_____ other (Please specify.)

your comments:

5. Which activity would your child be **least** likely to choose in his/her free time at home?

_____ listening to music

_____ playing with friends or siblings

_____ watching television

_____ reading

_____ participating in a sport

_____ playing video games

your comments:

6. In your opinion, how important is it for a child to be read to? (at home or in school)

_____ not at all important

_____ somewhat important

_____ important

_____ very important

your comments:

7. Increasing the amount of time children engage in recreational reading is an important goal worth pursuing.

_____ I strongly agree.

_____ I agree.

_____ I disagree.

_____ I strongly disagree.

your comments:

Appendix A

First Grade Questionnaire

Student Questionnaire

1. This is how I feel about reading--

2. When people read to me, I feel—.

3. I am a _____ reader.

4. I read _____ books everyday.

5. When I have free-time, I like to—

_____

_____

_____

6. My favorite person that reads to me is-

_____

Appendix A

Fourth Grade Questionnaire

STUDENT READING QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Put an X in front of the answer that you choose.
How often do you read when you have free time?

____ never
____ once in a while
____ sometimes
____ often

your comments:

2. Put the following activities in order from the one you like most to the one you like least. Write a 1 by your favorite activity and a 6 by your least favorite activity.

____ playing video games or other kinds of games
____ playing sports
____ reading
____ listening to music
____ playing with friends
____ watching television

your comments:

3. Put the following activities in order from the one on which you spend the most time to the one on which you spend the least time. Put a 1 by the activity on which you spend the most time and a 6 by the activity on which you spend the least time.

____ playing video games or other kinds of games
____ playing sports
____ reading
____ listening to music
____ playing with friends
____ watching television

your comments:

4. Put an X in front of the answer that you choose.
Which sentence best describes how you feel about reading?

____ I love reading.
____ I like reading.
____ I think reading is alright.
____ I dislike reading.
____ I hate reading.

Your comments:

5. Put an X in front of the answer that you choose.
Which sentence best describes how you feel about being read to?

____ I love it.
____ I like it.
____ It's alright.
____ I dislike it.
____ I hate it.

Your comments:

6. Put an X in front of the answer that you choose.
When you have free time, and reading material is available, how likely is it that you will use the time to read?

_____ It is a sure thing that I will read.
_____ I will probably read.
_____ I might read.
_____ I probably will not read.
_____ It is a sure thing that I will not read.

your comments:

Appendix B

Teacher Observation Checklist

Week of: _____

Ratings:
+ = Frequently
= Sometimes
0 = Not Yet

Names of Students	Selects reading as the free time activity when other options are available	Sustains interest in reading over allotted time period	Is actively engaged in reading	Exhibits enthusiasm for reading	Comments

Appendix C

Teacher Read-aloud Survey

1. I teach

_____ a primary grade.

_____ an intermediate grade.

2. How often do you read aloud to your class? (not including the parent read-aloud program)

_____ never

_____ rarely

_____ weekly

_____ several times a week

_____ daily

_____ other (Please specify.)

your comments:

3. In your opinion, how much value does teacher read-aloud to students have?

_____ not at all valuable

_____ somewhat valuable

_____ valuable

_____ very valuable

your comments:

Appendix D

Name _____

My Daily Reading Log

Date	Author	Title	Page

Appendix E

Name _____ Month _____

My Monthly Reading Record

NAME:

BOOKS I REALLY WANT TO READ!

TITLE	AUTHOR	I READ IT! ✓

Appendix G

Student Responsibilities for WEB Reading

~ Read for at least 20 to 30 minutes each day or evening Monday through Thursday and at least 30 minutes over the weekend.

~ Carry the WEB book back and forth to school each day in a waterproof bag.

~ Keep a record of your daily reading and of books completed.

~ Be prepared to be interviewed by a classmate or the teacher after you finish each book.

~ Interview your classmates when called upon to do so.

~ Take good care of the books.

ENJOY GETTING CAUGHT UP IN GOOD BOOKS!

Appendix H

Daily Reading Log Points Rubric

If you put your reading binder on the interview desk on the correct day, you get one point.

If you put your reading binder on the interview desk on the correct day, AND you have filled out your daily reading log completely, correctly, and legibly, you get two points.

If you put your reading binder on the interview desk on the correct day, AND you have filled out your daily reading log completely, correctly, and legibly, AND you have shown evidence of sufficient reading, you get three points.

Appendix I

First Grade WEB Interview

FICTION

Interview Question Choices:

1. What was the name of the book?
2. Who was the author?
3. Why do you think you picked this book?
4. What did you like about the book?
5. Was their anything you disliked about the story? If so, what?
6. Did anything surprise or puzzle you? If so, what?
7. How did the story make you feel? Why?
8. What did you think about as you read the story?
9. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate this book? Why?
10. What lesson can you learn from this book?
11. Does this book remind you of any other book you have ever read? If so, which book, and what is similar?
12. Did you think the book was interesting?
13. What was your favorite part of the book? Why?
14. What was your least favorite part of the book? Why?
15. Which character in the book was most like you? How?
16. Which character in the book was least like you? How?
17. Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?
18. What was the most important thing that happened in the book?
19. How did the book end?
20. Did you expect the book to end the way that it did? Why or why not?

21. What can you learn about life from this story?

22. What do you think was the message or theme of the book?

23. Why do you think the author wrote this book?

24. If you could change places with a character in the book, who would you choose and why?

25. What will you remember most about the story?

26. Would you like to read more books by this author? Why or why not?

27. If you could give the author some advice about how to improve the book, what would it be?

First Grade WEB Interview

NONFICTION

Interview Question Choices:

1. What was the name of the book? and Who was the author?
2. What was the book about?
3. Was the book illustrated? Who was the illustrator? Did the illustrations help you learn about the book?
4. Have you ever read any other books on this topic? Was this book better? Why?
5. Why do you think you picked this book?
6. What did you like about the book?
7. Was there anything you disliked about the book? If so, what?
8. Did anything surprise or puzzle you? If so, what?
9. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate this book? Why?
10. What did you learn from this book?
11. Did you think this book was interesting? Why or why not?
12. What was your favorite part of the book? Why?
13. If you meet the author, what would you ask him about the book?
14. Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?
15. What did you learn from this book?
16. Would you like to read more books by this author? Why or why not?
17. What do you think you will remember most about this book?

Fourth Grade WEB Interview

FICTION

Interview Question Choices:

1. What was the name of the book?
2. Who was the author?
3. Why do you think you picked this book?
4. What did you like about the book?
5. Was there anything you disliked about the story? If so, what?
6. Did anything surprise or puzzle you? If so, what?
7. Was there anything in the book that reminded you of something or someone in your own life? If so, what or who?
8. How did the story make you feel? Why?
9. What did you think about as you read the story?
10. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate this book? Why?
11. What lesson can you learn from this book?
12. Does this book remind you of any other book you have ever read? If so, which book, and what is similar?
13. Did you think the book was interesting? If so, how did the author make the book interesting to you? If not, why was the book boring to you?
14. What was your favorite part of the book? Why?
15. What was your least favorite part of the book? Why?
16. Which character in the book was most like you? How?

17. Which character in the book was least like you? How?
18. If you met the author, what would you ask him about the book?
19. Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?
20. What was the most important thing that happened in the book?
21. How did the story end? and Was the ending reasonable? Why or why not?
22. Did you expect the book to end the way that it did? Why or why not?
23. What can you learn about life from this story?
24. What do you think was the message or theme of the book?
25. Why do you think the author wrote this book?
26. If you could change places with a character in the book, who would you choose and why?
27. What will you remember most about the story?
28. Would you like to read more books by this author? Why or why not?
29. If you could give the author some advice about how to improve the book, what would it be?

Fourth Grade WEB Interview

NONFICTION

Interview Question Choices:

1. What was the name of the book? and Who was the author?
2. What was the book about?
3. Was the book illustrated? Who was the illustrator? In your opinion, what was the quality of the illustrations, and were they helpful in learning about the subject of the book?
4. Have you ever read any other books on this topic? If so, how do they compare to this book?
5. Why do you think you picked this book?
6. What did you like about the book?
7. Was there anything you disliked about the book? If so, what?
8. Did anything surprise or puzzle you? If so, what?
9. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate this book? Why?
10. What did you learn from this book?
11. Do you think the book was interesting? If so, how did the author make the book interesting to you? If not, why was the book boring to you?
12. What was your favorite part of the book? Why?
13. What was your least favorite part of the book? Why?
14. If you met the author, what would you ask him about the book?
15. Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?
16. What was the one most fascinating thing you learned from the book?
17. Would you like to read more books by this author? Why or why not?
18. If you could give the author some advice about how to improve the book, what would it be?
19. What do you think you will remember most about this book?

Appendix J

Read Aloud List for First Grade

1. The Mitten Jan Brett, 1996, New York Putnam Publishing Group
   A boy who wanted white mittens and learns a lesson.

2. Flat Stanley Jeff Brown, 1996, New York, NY Harper Collins Children's Books
   A story about a boy who becomes flat and travels the United States.

3. Arthur Series Marc Brown, 1990, Boston Random House, Inc.
   An aardvark's family and friends that teach morals.

4. Franklin Series Paulette Bourgeois, New York, NY 1995, Scholastic
   A turtle and friends that learn about the world.

5. Stellaluna Janell Cannon, San Diego, 1993, Harcourt
   A bat that learns about differences.

6. The Very Hungry Caterpillar Eric Carle, New York, 1994, Puntman Publisher
   A book with a caterpillar that teaches counting.

7. Dr. Seuss Series Dr. Seuss, 1976, New York, Random House Inc.
   Rhyming books.

8. Chrysanthemum Kevin Henkes, 1996, New York, Marrow, William, and Co.
   A book about a little girl who gets made fun of because her name is so long.

9. Amelia Bedelia Series Peggy Parish, 1978, New Y ,Harper Collins Children's Books
   Silly stories about Amelia who misunderstands everyone's directions.

10. Where the Wild Thing Are Maurice Sendak, 1984, New YorkHarper Collins Children's Books
    A boy who gets in trouble and dreams he's king of the Wild Things.

11. The True Story of the Three Little Pigs Jon Scieszka, 1996, New York Penguin Putman Pub.
    The pig's point of view of what really happened with the three little pigs.

12. Polar Express Chris VanAllsburg, 1985, Boston, Houghton Mufflin Co.
    A boy who travels to see Santa on the polar express.. Only for those who still believe!

13. Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day Judith Viorst, 1976, New York, Simon & Schuster Children's Books.
    A boy who has a VERY bad day!

Read Aloud List for Fourth Grade

1. Williwaw! Tom Bodett 1999 New York, New York Knopf
Two children in a tiny boat try to survive Alaska's most dangerous storm - a williwaw.

2. The Summer of Riley Eve Bunting 2001 New York, New York Harper Collins
A young boy tries to save his dog, Riley, when animal control officers plan to put the dog to death.

3. The Gadget War Betsy Duffey 1991 New York, New York Viking
Two third graders are determined to prove who the real gadget whiz is.

4. By the Great Horn Spoon! Sid Fleischman 1988 Boston, Massachusetts Little, Brown and Co.
Stowaways on a ship from Boston plan to hunt for gold in the 1989 California gold rush.

5. Top Secret John Reynolds Gardiner 1984 New York, New York Bantam Books
A fourth grader uses his brain and thinks crazy as he defies his rigid science teacher to pursue his science project on human photosynthesis.

6. Honus and Me Dan Gutman 1997 New York, New York Avon Books, Inc.
While cleaning an attic, a young boy finds the most valuable baseball card in the world and then travels back in time to meet Honus Wagner.

7. The Fallen Spaceman Lee Harding 1982 New York, New York Bantam Books
Two boys discover a gigantic spacesuit that holds an alien trapped on Earth after his spaceship mistakenly leaves him behind.

8. Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio Peg Kehret 1996 Morton Grove, Illinois Albert Whitman & Company
Author Peg Kehret describes the trials and triumphs in her childhood battle with polio.

9. Skinnybones Barbara Park 1982 New York, New York Knopf
The worst player in Little League saves himself with his wild sense of humor.

10. When the Soldiers Were Gone Vera Propp 1999 New York, New York Putnam's
A young boy who had to hide from Nazi soldiers when the war began is taken from the family he has come to love when the war ends.

11. Holes Louis Sachar 1998 New York, New York Farrar, Straus and Giroux
As his punishment for stealing a pair of baseball shoes, a young boy goes to Camp Green Lake where he must dig a large hole every day in the hot Texas sun.

12. Journey to Topaz: A Story of the Japanese-American Evacuation Yoshiko Uchida 1971 New York, New York Scribner

A Japanese girl and her family are forced to go to an internment camp in Utah after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

13. Danger in Quicksand Swamp Bill Wallace 1991 New York, New York Pocket Books

Two boys, looking for buried treasure, face alligators, quicksand, and a killer in a Louisiana swamp.

14. Danger on Panther Peak Bill Wallace 1985 New York, New York Simon and Schuster

A young boy must travel alone by horseback through panther territory to get help for his injured grandfather.

15. Takers and Returners: A Novel of Suspense Carol Beach York 1973 Nashville, Tennessee T. Nelson

A game devised and played by children to ease the boredom of life in a small resort town during summer vacation has unexpectedly disastrous results.

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